
In Memoriam

JOHN VESTAL HADLEY

Remorseless Time that knows not the weight of years has passed and, stopping not like other conquerers to note the ruin it has wrought, has called from among the living in the full fruitage of an eventful life another that has graced the bench of this Court and added luster to the shining lights that preceded him. John Vestal Hadley is dead.

He was born October 31, 1840, in Hendricks County, Indiana, and died amid the scenes of his nativity, November 17, 1915. How long, and yet how short was the span of that life! He crowded into that brief space more of the joys and sorrows of life than are allotted to the ordinary individual. Born on a farm amid the toil and hardships of pioneer life, he, by his own zeal and endeavors arose above the surroundings and secured in his youth the rudiments of an education, which, added to in his more mature years, placed him among the front ranks of the foremost thinkers and workers in his chosen profession. He served three and one-half years as a soldier in defense of his country; twelve years as Judge of the Hendricks Circuit Court; one term as State Senator from his native county; and from January, 1899, to January, 1911, was Judge of this court. In all positions to which he was chosen he knew no motive but justice and no guide but his conscience. His aims and ambitions were of the highest order. He exercised and practiced the spirit

of law rather than the letter, and to his mastery of the principles of his profession he added the spirit of justice and equity, which were the ruling passions of his life. From his wonderful storehouse of learning and wisdom manifested in all his actions as lawyer and judge, the present and future have received a rich heritage. In his declaration of legal principles, he was clear, but faultlessly concise, not wasting in repetition the beauty of the doctrine declared. His opinions were exhaustive without being verbose and will ever remain "a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night" to men of his profession who may follow in his luminous footsteps. Adding to his legal qualifications, he manifested a beauty of soul and symmetry of thought that endeared him to all men of every class and character with whom he came in contact.

His life is a beautiful example, worthy the emulation of all men, especially the lawyer. His aim was to do justice and yet to temper that justice with mercy. We could not wish, no man could desire, a better epitaph than that which is universally written or, at least, thought by all his friends and acquaintances, "He loved his fellow man." It may be said of him as of the Shepherd King of old, "He served his day and generation well, and fell asleep." He touched every chord in the harp of life. His past is secure; his future is with Him who said, "Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

This memorial to John Vestal Hadley, presented by Erwin, J., was unanimously adopted and ordered spread of record.

LAIRY, C. J.
